Junior Achievement of Michigan

High School Economics Program

(The information stated below is the result of a external formative evaluation done by the Worldwide Institute for Research and Evaluation at the request of Junior Achievement of Michigan. This evaluation took place across the state during the 2004-2005 school year.)

Description

JA Economics is designed as a one-semester course that examines the fundamental concepts of micro-, macro-, and international economics. While students receive standard textbooks and study guides, JA brings classic economic theory to life through supplemental computer-based business simulations, a student-run company, and the use of business volunteers who present activities to students and serve as role models of the concepts being taught. *JA Economics* enhances students' learning of the following concepts:

*Advantage	*Demand	*Economic systems
*Exchange rates	*Fiscal policy	*Government
*GDP	*Income distribution	*Inflation
*Investment	*Labor	*Markets
*Opportunity costs	*Productivity	*Scarcity
*Supply	*Trade	

JA Economics also encourages the development of the following skills:

*Applying information	*Classifying Research	*Critical thinking
*Decision making	*Giving Reports	*Graphing
*Interpreting data	***Math computation**	***Reading**
*Research	*Taking notes	***Writing**

Program Curriculum

The majority of teachers reported that the *JA Economics* curriculum meets district, school, and classroom objectives. They also suggested that the lessons were relevant to students' personal needs.

Teachers report that *JA Economics*, particularly when used in conjunction with its supplementary materials and programs, captures and maintains the attention of students. Further, as students are engaged with the program they are learning from it, increasing both their understanding of economics and their ability to apply economic concepts to their lives.

All teachers agreed that the student workbook provides a valuable learning resource that students can personalize, encouraging them to study and apply what they are learning.

Teachers who used the computer simulations and/or the JA Company program reported that these real-world simulations assisted students in understanding how economics could be applied.

Teachers also reported that the program impacts student learning through effective hands-on activities and supplemental materials.

When presented by fully prepared and skilled consultants, program activities and their related supplements engage students, maintain their interest, and increase their understanding of economics and its applications.

The majority of teachers (78%) reported that the *JA Economics* curriculum fits well with their school and district objectives and meets the requirement for economics at their school. Teachers also pointed out that economics is a requirement for the state of Michigan and that the *JA Economics* curriculum fills that requirement adequately. Perhaps more importantly, 92% reported that the curriculum fit the needs of their class. In addition, 60% suggested that the lessons were relevant to students' personal needs.

An effective program curriculum ensures that students will easily grasp concepts. A majority of the teachers (63%) reported that the concepts are presented in a way that facilitates students' understanding. They suggested that the program brings concepts to life and provides students with an experiential understanding of economics.

Effectiveness

Teachers who do not have specific training in economics reported that the textbook was easy to comprehend, that they learned and even added to their knowledge from reading it, and it facilitated their presentation of the material. Eight-four percent of the teachers agreed that the *JA Economics* textbook was a good resource for teachers new to teaching economics.

Nearly all of the teachers (98%) reported that the student workbook accompanying *JA Economics* was an invaluable tool, providing a key learning resource for students. Because the student keeps the workbook at the conclusion of the class, they can personalize it, write in it and make it their own. The workbook encouraged students to engage with the material and served as a helpful study guide.

Of those teachers using either the MESE or TITAN computer simulations with *JA Economics*, 63% reported that the simulations "brought the program to life". Seventy percent suggested that the simulations facilitated learning of the economic concepts.

Nearly all of the teachers (90%) reported that they would be willing to have *JA Economics* in their classrooms again.

In addition, 75% of the teachers reported that they would recommend this program to other economics teachers. They suggested that the program is a positive learning experience that helps prepare students for a chance at economic success.

Junior Achievement Programs and National Council of Teachers of Mathematics National Math Standards

Purpose:
Junior Achievement educates and inspires young people to value free enterprise, business, and economics to improve the quality of their lives.

Mission:
Junior Achievement will ensure that every child has a fundamental understanding of the free enterprise system.

NCTM National Math Standards	Ourselves	Our Families	Our Community	Our City	Our Region	Our Nation	JA Enterprise Village	JA Economics for Success	JA Global Marketplace	Our World	Personal Economics	Enterprise in Action	ESIS	The International Marketplace	JA Go Figure!	JA Finance Park	JA Economics	JA Company Program	JA Success Skills	JA TITAN	JA Personal Finance	JA Job Shadow	GLOBE
Numbers and Operations																							
Understand numbers, number systems, and meanings of operations; be able to compute fluently and make reasonable estimates.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Algebra																							
Understand patterns, relations, and functions; represent mathematical situations using algebraic symbols; use mathematical models; analyze change using graphs.			X			X	X		X			X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Geometry																							
Analyze shapes of two and three dimensions; specify locations using coordinate geometry; use symmetry, visualization, spatial reasoning, and geometric modeling to solve problems.				X											X								
Measurement																							
Understand units, systems, and processes of measurement; apply appropriate techniques, tools, and formulas to determine measurements.			X	X		X			X			X			X		X	X		X	X		X
Data Analysis and Probability																							
Collect, organize, and display data to answer relevant questions; use statistical methods to analyze data; make predictions based on data; apply concepts of probability.			X			X	X		X			X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Problem Solving																							
Apply a variety of strategies to solve problems in mathematics and other contexts.			X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Reasoning and Proof																							
Investigate mathematical conjectures; use various types of reasoning and methods of proof.			X		X	X		X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Communication																							
Communicate mathematical thinking coherently and use the language of mathematics to express mathematical ideas precisely.			X		X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Connections																							
Understand how mathematical ideas interconnect; apply mathematics in contexts outside of mathematics.	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X
Representation																							
Use mathematical representations to solve problems and to model and interpret physical, social, and mathematical phenomena.			X			X	X				X	X	X		X	X	X	X		X	X		X

JUNIOR ACHIEVEMENT OF MICHIGAN FRANCHISES

Battle Creek and Kalamazoo
Brad Kaufmann
Junior Achievement of South Central MI.
34 West Jackson Street, Suite 3B
Battle Creek, MI. 49017
phone: 269-968-9188 x23 bkaufmann@jaswmich.com
fax: 269-660-6635

Detroit
Lynn Feldhouse, President
Junior Achievement of Southeast Michigan
577 E. Larned Street, Suite 100
Detroit, MI. 48226
phone: 313-962-5687– lfeldhouse@jamichigan.org
fax:

Grand Rapids
Bill Coderre, President
Junior Achievement of the Michigan Great Lakes
3665 28th St. SE, Suite C.
Grand Rapids, MI. 49512
phone: 616-575-9080 - bcoderre@iserv.net
fax: 616-575-9028

Jackson
Connie Poisson, President
Junior Achievement of the Michigan Edge
209 E. Washington, Suite 318
Jackson, MI. 49201
phone: 517-782-7822 x14 cpoisson@jamichiganedge.com
fax: 517-780-0385

Midland
Ann Fillmore, President
Junior Achievement of Central Michigan Inc.
5108 Eastman Ave Suite 4
Midland, MI. 48640-6823
phone: 989-631-0162 – afillmore.ja@tm.net
fax: 989-631-6210

Saginaw
Mark Pankner, President
Junior Achievement of Northeast Michigan
1781 Fordney
Saginaw, MI. 48601
phone: 989-752-9050 – mpankner@janemich.net
fax: 989-752-4633

St. Joseph/Benton Harbor
Kelly Matti, President
Junior Achievement of Berrien & Cass Counties
2907 Division St., Suite 109
St. Joseph, MI. 49085
phone: 269-983-7579 – kmatti@michianaja.org
fax:

Lansing
Larry Richardson, President
Junior Achievement of Mid Michigan
107 N. Washington Square – 2nd Floor
Lansing, MI. 48933
phone: 517-371-5437 – jamidmichigan@yahoo.com
fax: 517-371-4533